

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 10-14 and 16 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1-9 and 15 to read as follows.

1. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus for performing a recording operation by discharging ink from a discharge port of an ink jet head, comprising:

driving means for discharging the ink from ~~said~~ the discharge port in response to a recording signal; and

meniscus vibrating means for vibrating a meniscus in the vicinity of ~~said~~ the discharge port, with a repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside an audible frequency range or ~~belonging to~~ within a low frequency range, in a case where the ink is not discharged from ~~said~~ the discharge port.

2. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside the audible frequency range is a frequency higher than 20 kHz.

3. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside the audible frequency range is a frequency lower than 20 Hz.

4. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~belonging to~~ within the low frequency range is a frequency of 20 to 100 Hz.

5. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the vibration of the meniscus is ~~given~~ applied between the recording operations for discharging the ink.

6. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means ~~for generating the vibration are~~ comprises an electrostriction element.

7. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means ~~for generating the vibration are~~ comprises a heating element for generating a bubble in the ink.

8. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means ~~for generating the vibration are~~ comprises means for causing deformation of a pressure chamber by using an electrostatic force.

9. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means ~~for generating the vibration are~~ comprises a small vibration adding device.

Claims 10-14 (cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording method for performing a recording operation by discharging ink from a discharge port of an ink jet head, comprising:

a step for discharging the ink from ~~said~~ the discharge port in response to a recording signal; and

a meniscus vibrating step for vibrating a meniscus in the vicinity of ~~said~~ the discharge port, with a repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside an audible frequency range or ~~belonging to~~ within a low frequency range, in a case where the ink is not discharged from ~~said~~ the discharge port.

Claim 16 (cancelled)